

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for configuring policies among a plurality of network components  
2 equipped with scanners, comprising:
  - 3 (a) receiving an Internet Protocol (IP) address at a particular one of a plurality of  
4 network components equipped with a scanner, wherein the same IP address is  
5 utilized to configure policies among a plurality of the network components;
  - 6 (b) identifying a portion of the IP address at the particular one of the network  
7 components; and
  - 8 (c) determining a policy unique to the particular one of the network components  
9 utilizing the identified portion of the IP address.
- 1 2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the network components include  
2 hosts.
- 1 3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the IP is IPv4.
- 1 4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the portion of the IP address includes  
2 a network part of the IP address.
- 1 5. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the policy dictates which hosts are to  
2 be scanned.
- 1 6. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the portion of the IP address includes  
2 a predetermined number of bits of the IP address.

- 1 7. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein a plurality of the bits are reserved for  
2 defining an interface index value.
- 1 8. The method as recited in claim 7, and further comprising utilizing the interface  
2 index value to identify an interface of the network component to be scanned in  
3 accordance with the policy.
- 1 9. The method as recited in claim 8, wherein the interface index value is utilized to  
2 look up the interface in an index table.
- 1 10. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein a plurality of the bits are reserved for  
2 defining a subnet selector value.
- 1 11. The method as recited in claim 10, wherein the subnet selector value indicates  
2 which subnet mask to use.
- 1 12. The method as recited in claim 1, and further comprising scanning the particular  
2 one of the network components utilizing the determined policy.
- 1 13. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the particular one of the network  
2 components is equipped with a scanner adapted to utilizing the policy for  
3 scanning purposes.
- 1 14. A computer program product for configuring policies among a plurality of  
2 network components equipped with scanners, comprising:  
3 (a) computer code for receiving an Internet Protocol (IP) address at a particular one  
4 of a plurality of network components equipped with a scanner, wherein the same

IP address is utilized to configure policies among a plurality of the network components;

(b) computer code for identifying a portion of the IP address at the particular one of the network components; and

(c) computer code for determining a policy unique to the particular one of the network components utilizing the identified portion of the IP address.

15. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, wherein the network components include hosts.

16. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, wherein the IP is IPv4.

17. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, wherein the portion of the IP address includes a network part of the IP address.

18. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, wherein the policy dictates which hosts are to be scanned.

19. The computer program product as recited in claim 14 wherein the portion of the IP address includes a predetermined number of bits of the IP address.

20. The computer program product as recited in claim 19, wherein a plurality of the bits are reserved for defining an interface index value.

21. The computer program product as recited in claim 20, and further comprising computer code for utilizing the interface index value to identify an interface of the network component to be scanned in accordance with the policy.

- 1 22. The computer program product as recited in claim 21, wherein the interface  
2 index value is utilized to look up the interface in an index table.
- 1 23. The computer program product as recited in claim 19, wherein a plurality of the  
2 bits are reserved for defining a subnet selector value.
- 1 24. The computer program product as recited in claim 23, wherein the subnet  
2 selector value indicates which subnet mask to use.
- 1 25. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, and further comprising  
2 computer code for scanning the particular one of the network components  
3 utilizing the determined policy.
- 1 26. The computer program product as recited in claim 14, wherein the particular one  
2 of the network components is equipped with a scanner adapted to utilizing the  
3 policy for scanning purposes.
- 1 27. A system for configuring policies among a plurality of network components  
2 equipped with scanners, comprising:  
3 (a) logic for receiving an Internet Protocol (IP) address at a particular one of a  
4 plurality of network components equipped with a scanner, wherein the same IP  
5 address is utilized to configure policies among a plurality of the network  
6 components;  
7 (b) logic for identifying a portion of the IP address at the particular one of the  
8 network components; and  
9 (c) logic for determining a policy unique to the particular one of the network  
10 components utilizing the identified portion of the IP address.

- 1 28. A method for generating an Internet Protocol (IP) address for configuring a  
2 policy among a plurality of network components equipped with scanners,  
3 comprising:  
4 (a) generating an IP address;  
5 (b) transmitting the IP address to a plurality of network components each equipped  
6 with a scanner;  
7 (c) wherein the network components are each capable of identifying a portion of the  
8 IP address, and determining a policy unique to the network component utilizing  
9 the identified portion of the IP address.

- 1 29. An Internet Protocol (IP) address data structure for configuring a policy among a  
2 plurality of network components equipped with scanners, comprising:  
3 (a) an interface object for identifying an interface to be scanned in accordance with  
4 a policy; and  
5 (b) a subnetwork object for identifying a mask to use in determining a subnetwork  
6 to be scanned in accordance with the policy.

- 1 30. A method for embedding information in an Internet Protocol (IP) address for  
2 scanning purposes, comprising:  
3 (a) embedding information in an IP address; and  
4 (b) sending the IP address to a plurality of network components;  
5 (c) wherein the information is capable of being used by a scanner for scanning  
6 purposes.

- 1 31. A computer program product for embedding information in an Internet Protocol  
2 (IP) address for scanning purposes, comprising:  
3 (a) computer code for embedding information in an IP address; and  
4 (b) computer code for sending the IP address to a plurality of network components;

- 5 (c) wherein the information is capable of being used by a scanner for scanning  
6 purposes.

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